July/August/September 1995 Volume 20, Number 4

A summary of recent news stories from the University of California San Francisco

UCSF

To Our Neighbors

A hip pad to prevent injuries during a fall

UCSF biomechanics expert Steve Robinovitch, PhD, has designed a hip pad that can be used to reduce injuries during a fall. Measuring about one-half to three-quarters of an inch thick, the pad is designed to be worn in an undergarment and comfortably conforms to the shape of the body under normal conditions. But upon impact, the material hardens to form a solid bridge over the hip bone, which shunts the energy away from the femur and into surrounding soft tissue.

Robinovitch arrived at SFGH just eight months ago from MIT to establish the hospital's new orthopaedic biomechanics research laboratory. He and East Coast collaborators, who originally developed the pad, now are testing it in nursing homes to determine if people are willing to wear the device on a regular basis.

Ninety percent of all hip fractures are due to falls and virtually all occur in the elderly. "This country alone spends over $7 billion each year for hip fracture patients," says Robinovitch. After suffering a hip fracture, an elderly person's life can change drastically. They may become immobile, have a much greater dependence on others, and experience a dramatic decrease in quality of life.

He and his research team also are studying fractures in children. While the elderly are generally slow to react to a fall, a child will attempt to break it with an outstretched hand, often causing a fracture of the forearm.

Many injuries to children occur in day care centers and schools, and the number one site for those injuries is the playground, says Robinovitch. He and colleagues have conducted studies testing a variety of different materials for playground surfaces to prevent both head and upper extremity injuries.

For further information, call the Biomechanics Research Laboratory at 206-6864.

Allen J. Balderson

Steve Robinovitch with two hip pad prototypes

Babies endangered by short hospital stays

The trend toward shorter hospital stays combined with recent changes in the standard treatment for jaundice in newborns could be endangering some newborns, two UCSF infant specialists say.

As a result of a cut in the average stay from three days to 36 hours, neonatologist Carol Miller, MD, says, studies under way show an increase in the number of babies readmitted to hospitals for a variety of conditions, including dehydration from inappropriate feeding and severe jaundice.

Current guidelines for testing jaundice places less critical significance on the otherwise seemingly healthy newborn, even though these babies are being discharged earlier, says Augusto Sola, MD, director of neonatal clinical services at UCSF.

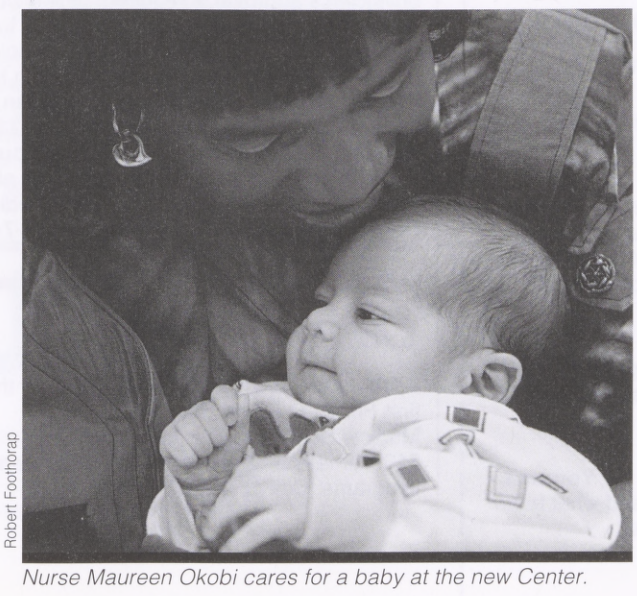
While jaundice is easily treated and usually is not harmful to babies who are born at full-term and in good health, Sola conducted a study which found an alarming number of infants over the past two-and-a-half years were diagnosed with brain damage related to the disorder.

Sola's study data from 1972 to 1991 showed that in the 23 hospitals studied when jaundice was managed more aggressively and longer hospital stays were the norm, there was only one reported admission of a baby with bilirubin encephalopathy — a condition where high levels of bilirubin builds up in the blood and possibly can be absorbed into brain cells, leading to irreversible brain damage — out of 2.8 million live births. From 1992 to 1994, however, UCSF's intensive care nursery alone admitted five infants who were born full-term and healthy but then developed the condition.

Sola stresses that most newborns begin to show signs of jaundice after they are 24 to 36 hours old, so early hospital discharges may leave mothers and family members in a vulnerable position for recognizing symptoms.

New Infant Care Center at SFGH

San Francisco General Hospital has a new nursery, which enables caregivers to look after sicker and smaller, premature babies. The new, $1.9 million Infant Care Center has nearly twice the space of the old nursery and allows the hospital to expand its neonatal intensive care services.



Robert Foothorap

Nurse Maureen Okobi cares for a baby at the new Center.

A bright space with many amenities for families, the nursery is in part a response to the movement toward managed care and is designed to help the hospital compete with others around the city.

"So often in city and county hospitals patients don't really receive what they might in a private hospital. Here, for the first time, the physical setting is going to be one of the best in the city. And this is for people in the inner city. That is a great and rare thing to have happen," says William Taeusch, MD, chief of pediatrics at SFGH.

The new, 43-bed center enables the hospital to care for all infants except those requiring major heart surgery or artificial heart-lung support, says Taeusch, who is a neonatologist, a specialist in newborn care.

"That means that babies will be able to stay in their own neighborhood, their own hospital," says nurse Donna Loper, clinical coordinator for labor and delivery and the nursery. "We can facilitate family bonding and frequent visitation and help in the infant's transition to home."

For further information, call 206-8363.

In Brief

Poll finds people would use home HIV test

A significant number of people state they would use a home test to determine if they are infected with HIV, according to a study by Kathyrn A. Phillips, PhD, a researcher at the UCSF Center for AIDS Prevention Studies. The FDA currently is considering approval of the kit. Using data from a survey of 20,000 people by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the UCSF study concluded that 29 percent would be "very" or "somewhat" likely to use the home tests.

Osteoporosis studies

Volunteers are needed for three different osteoporosis studies. The first is a multicenter study at SFGH of a new drug to prevent and treat steroid-induced osteoporosis. Men and women, ages 18 to 80, who currently are taking oral steroids equivalent to prednisone 7.5 mg/day are needed. Participants will be reimbursed. Call Nancy Lane, MD, at 206-6654, or Marie Herron, RN, at 206-6643.

The Potassium Bicarbonate Osteoporosis Research Group is comparing the effects of the dietary supplements potassium bicarbonate and sodium bicarbonate. Participants must be healthy females, ages 45 to 75, who had their last menstrual period five or more years ago, and have had no estrogen replacement during the past year. Participants will be reimbursed. Call 476-3498.

UCSF and UCSF/Mount Zion researchers are trying to determine whether drug treatment can slow or reverse bone loss in osteoporosis. Women age 80 or younger who are at least two years postmenopausal, are not taking estrogen, and have had osteoporosis-related fractures or have low-bone density may be eligible. Call Rowena Mah, RN, at 476-2713 or Jennifer Wilson at 476-5546.

Treating chronic angina

Volunteers are needed to participate in a study of a non-surgical, non-medicinal treatment already used for two decades in China to treat chronic angina — severe chest discomfort that can strike when the heart is deprived of sufficient blood. The study is open to men and women with angina that has persisted after standard medical interventions. The study will involve using a special patient bed outfitted with inflatable cuffs similar to the arm cuffs used in measuring blood pressure. Call 476-1722.

Draft EIR for Laurel Heights

Anyone interested in reviewing a copy of the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Laurel Heights building should go to one of the following San Francisco libraries: main library, Larkin and McAllister streets; Presidio branch, 3150 Sacramento St.; Richmond branch, 351 9th Ave.; Western Addition branch, 1550 Scott St.; Sunset branch, 1305 18th Ave.; as well as the UCSF/Mount Zion Hospital Library, first floor, 1600 Divisadero St.

Individual copies of the Draft EIR may be obtained any weekday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Public Affairs Department, Laurel Heights, Rm. 103; or at MCB, Rm. 566.

Public comments on the document should be sent to Michelle Schaefer, UCSF Campus Planning, 1855 Folsom St., #566, San Francisco, CA 94143-0286, no later than 5 p.m. on Thursday, July 20.

More news for you

on the back page

What's happening

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Special Events

Mon., Aug. 7-Fri., Aug. 18
Mon., Aug. 21-Fri., Sept. 1
Onstage Summer Theater Camp for Children. Features theater games, improvisation, juggling, mime, poetry and creation of an original production. First session: ages 9-11. Second session: ages 12-14. Sponsored by Millberry Arts & Performances. Call 476-6761.

Thurs., Sept. 23
Eating Well. Learn about the "Food Pyramid" and discover ways to increase your energy, lose weight and feel better. Sponsored by UCSF Medical Group and Health Net. 6-8 p.m. Call 476-0373 for location.

Children's Summer Film Festival

Films are shown on Fridays at 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. in Cole Hall, enter through 513 Parnassus. Prices run $2 to $3.50. Grandparents free when accompanied by their grandchildren. Sponsored by Millberry Arts & Performances's Cole Hall Cinema. Call 476-6761. (Movies subject to change.)

July 7
Aladdin

July 14
Thumbelina

July 21
The Pagemaster

July 28
Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

AIDS Programs

The UCSF AIDS Health Project (AHP) offers a variety of free support groups for residents of San Francisco, including groups for people with AIDS, asymptomatic HIV+, HIV+ African-American heterosexual men, HIV- with AIDS-related concerns and caregivers. They also offer drop-in groups for HIV+ and PWA, monthly disability workshops, social events for HIV+ and HIV- and a meditation and self-help group. The Project also provides free individual risk assessments & referrals. For more information, an intake interview for a particular group or an appointment for a risk assessment, visit the AHP at its new location, 400 Castro St., or call 476-3902.

Recreation & Fitness

Get three months of unlimited aerobics and body conditioning classes at Millberry Fitness Center for $199. Special card allows you to take as many classes as you wish from July 1 through September 30. Call 502-4397 for details. Millberry offers over 100 fitness and recreation classes, including Aikido, painting, Brazilian/Carribean dance, Kindergymusic and more. Call 476-1115 for a class schedule.

Volunteer Orientation

Program to acquaint prospective volunteers with opportunities available in the Medical Center at UCSF. Meetings at Langley Porter Psychiatric Institute Auditorium, 401 Parnassus, and at UCSF/Mount Zion in Herbst Hall, 1600 Divisadero. For dates and times of Parnassus orientations call 476-1196. Call 885-7353 for UCSF/Mount Zion schedule.

Outdoors Unlimited

Outdoors Unlimited is a cooperative resource center for outdoor recreation and adventure, serving both the UCSF campus and the general public. New location: basement of the UCSF Library, 530 Parnassus. Call 476-2078.

Tues., July 25
Welcome to Outdoors Unlimited. How to learn new skills, meet people and become involved in cooperative outdoor adventuring. UCSF Library basement, 530 Parnassus. Call 476-2078.

Brown Bag Lectures

Free lectures held weekly at noon on Wednesdays in Rm. 300, Health Sciences West, enter through 513 Parnassus (P); monthly on Thursdays in Rm. 125, UCSF/Mission Center Building (MCB), 1855 Folsom St.; and monthly on Tuesdays in Herbst Hall, UCSF/Mount Zion (MZ), 1600 Divisadero. Sponsored by Public Service Programs. Call 476-4394.

July 5
Does AIDS Prevention Work? Making a difference in preventing new HIV infections. (P)

July 12
Dynamic Health in Motion. Posture, stride and ergonomic tips for walking, hiking and running. (P)

July 18
Cosmetic Surgery and Skin Care for the Summer Sun. (MZ)

July 19
Diabetes and Drugs. (P)

July 20
Preventive Health Care. Learn strategies to maximize disease prevention, wellness and longevity. (MCB)

July 26
How to Create the Life You Want. Get recharged and learn to be successful. (P)

Aug. 2
How and Why We Age. (P)

Aug. 9
Voice Disorders: The Sound of Trouble. (P)

Aug. 15
Eye Surgery in the Jungles of Guatemala. Discover the contributions UCSF/Mount Zion staff make in the lives of Guatemalans. (MZ)

Aug. 16
Calming Down in a Stressed-Out World. Learning to cope with anger and impatience. (P)

Aug. 17
How to Create the Life You Want. Get recharged and learn to be successful. (MCB)

Aug. 23
Managed Care or Virtual Chaos: Will Computers Decide? Find out how clinical enterprises are using information systems to meet competitive demands. (P)

Aug. 30
Lovers for Life. (P)

Mount Zion Community Meetings

Meetings to keep the community apprised of activities of interest and to listen to neighborhood concerns. Next meeting: **Tues., Sept. 26.** Executive Board Rm., 2nd fl., UCSF/Mount Zion, 1600 Divisadero. 7 p.m. Call 476-3206.

Great Expectations Programs for Parents

The UCSF Birth Center offers classes & video presentations for expectant parents on Wednesdays, 7-8:30 p.m., in Rm. 326, Ambulatory Care Center, 400 Parnassus. Call 476-MOMS for information.

July 1
Childbirth Choices: Options for Labor & Birth.

Aug. 16
Birth Alternatives: Adapting Home Birth Methods to Hospital Birth.

Sept. 20
Labor Support and Medication Through Childbirth.

Art Exhibits

Through Thurs., Aug. 31
The Color of Landscape: Paintings by Jack Beck. On display at the Faculty/Alumni House, 745 Parnassus. Open weekdays or by appointment. Call 476-4723.

Hospitals Auxiliary Art Exhibit. On display in the lobby of Moffitt/Long Hospitals, 505 Parnassus, June 26 through August 28 will be watercolors and acrylics by Alan Moore and prints by Jenette Foster. On display August 28 through September 25 will be pastels by Patricia Preble, calligraphy by William Farnan and oils by Andrew Thomas. A portion of all proceeds benefits patients at the Medical Center at UCSF. To purchase or reserve work, call 476-4906.

Institute of Healing Arts & Sciences

A series of free talks and workshops on alternatives in health care and healing. Talks held on Fridays at noon in Rm. 721, Nursing Bldg., enter through 521 Parnassus. Call 330-5353 for details.

July 5
Colorful Names & You. Discover the keys to beauty, personality and career.

July 14
Rolfing: Structural Integration. Explore the systematic reorganization of the human structure into an integrated whole.

July 21
Reiki: A Complementary Therapy & Stress Reduction.

July 28
Qigong for Health & Healing.

Aug. 4
Death as Healer, Death as Cure. Explore the healing process and how to aid the dying. Followed by workshops on Mon., Aug. 14, and Wed., Aug. 16. $100 each. 6:30-9:30 p.m. Call 479-5002 to register.

Aug. 11
Feng Shui & Health. Learn to use feng shui to support the healing process.

Aug. 18
Being Your Own Psychic.

Aug. 25
Zen Healing Massage Therapy.

Sept. 8
Creating Wholeness. Integrating the mind and body for self-healing.

Sept. 15
The Western Wisdom Teachings: Spiritual Transformation and the 21st Century. Followed by workshops on Mon., Sept. 18, and Tues., Sept. 19. $10 each. 6:30 p.m. Call 510-654-4428 to register.

Sept. 22
Principles of Healthy Living. How to attain and maintain optimal physical, mental and emotional well-being.

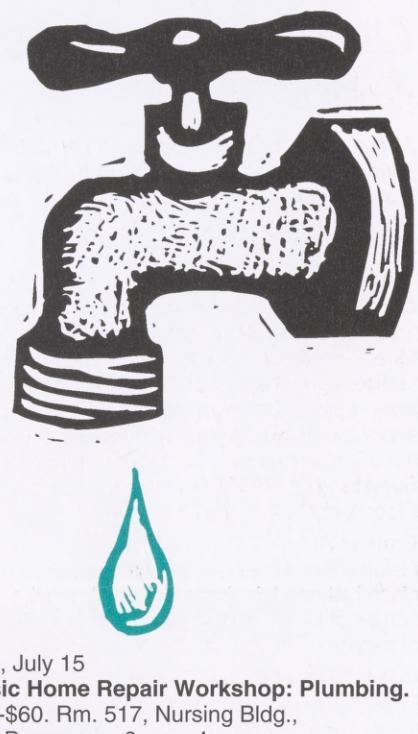
Sept. 29
How to Make a Good Case for Yourself. Learn communication skills and what to do when they go out the window.

Women's Programs

Events sponsored by the Women's Resource Center, unless otherwise noted. Call 476-5222 to pre-register for workshops and for information on ongoing groups.

Sat., July 8
Reclaim Your Voice: A Writing Workshop for Trauma Survivors. Sponsored by Rape Prevention Education Project. $35. Rm. 130, Clinical Sciences Bldg., enter through 513 Parnassus. 1-4 p.m.

Tues., July 11
The Fairer Sex? The Power Dead-Even Rule and Other Gender Differences in the Workplace. Two videos explore gender differences and discrimination in the '90s. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.



Sat., July 15
Basic Home Repair Workshop: Plumbing. $45-$60. Rm. 517, Nursing Bldg., 513 Parnassus. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Thurs., July 20
The Feminine Fire. Explore folktales and rituals celebrating the inspiration, erotic fulfillment and social organization of women. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.

Sat., July 22
Workshop: Suffering & Delight — Stress Reduction Through Meditation. $30-$40. Rm. 130, Clinical Sciences, 521 Parnassus. 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Sat., Aug. 12
Self-Defense for Women. Sponsored by Rape Prevention Education Project. $35/$65. Studio 2, Millberry Fitness Center, 500 Parnassus. 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Breast Cancer Screening

Women can have low-cost mammograms — X-rays to screen for breast cancer — from a mobile van that travels to convenient Bay Area locations. The procedure takes approximately 20 minutes and costs $65. Your physician's approval is required, plus his/her full name, address & telephone number to assure results are mailed promptly. Appointments must be made at least one month to six weeks in advance. Find out when the van will be in your neighborhood by calling 476-2193 between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. A $65 mammography screening also is available at the UCSF/Mount Zion Medical Center Radiology Department. Call 885-7465.

Campus Tours

All tours are free and begin at 1 p.m. on the first Friday of each month. Meet in the Medical Sciences Bldg. lobby, 513 Parnassus. Sponsored by Public Service Programs. Call 476-4394.

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Senior Lecture Series

UCSF Medical Group/Seniority Plus presents the following free lectures on Mondays at 10 a.m. Call 476-0373 for more information.

July 10
Benign Prostatic Hypertrophy: What You Should Know. Lakeside Presbyterian Church, 19th Ave. & Eucalyptus.

Aug. 14
Pep Up Your Life: Fitness for Older Adults. Herbst Hall, UCSF/Mount Zion, 1600 Divisadero.

Sept. 11
Coping with Loss & Change. Lakeside Presbyterian Church, 19th Ave. & Eucalyptus.

Ongoing Meetings & Hotlines

At the Heart of It. A support group for heart patients experiencing fear, anxiety, confusion & stress, facilitated by a cardiac social worker and a registered nurse. Meets at UCSF/Mount Zion, 1600 Divisadero. Call 885-7227.

AWAKE: AWAKE (alert, well and keeping energetic) is a support and education group for people with sleep apnea and their families. Meets the third Thursday of each month and features guest speakers on topics relating to sleep apnea, followed by time for socializing and support. Bring your CPAP equipment to have it checked by a homecare specialist. Sponsored by UCSF/Mount Zion Sleep Disorders Center. Call 885-7886.

Cancer Referral Hotline: The UCSF Cancer Referral Service enables cancer patients to place just one telephone call and learn the names of UCSF doctors specializing in the kind of treatment they need. Call 1-800-888-8664.

UCSF Gospel Choir: This campus group invites community members of all skill levels to join them. Rehearsals are held on Tuesdays at UCSF/Mission Center, 1855 Folsom, and on Thursdays at the Parnassus campus. Sponsored by Millberry Arts & Performances. Call 476-6761 for more information.

Look Good, Feel Better: Expert advice on makeup, wigs and the use of turbans provided for people who have undergone chemotherapy or radiation. Held every other month in the 11 Long Solarium, Long Hospital, 505 Parnassus, and at UCSF/Mount Zion. Co-sponsored by the American Cancer Society and supported by the Donna Smith Fund. Call 476-1383 to pre-register for Parnassus meetings, 885-3693 for UCSF/Mount Zion meetings.

Primary Care Hotline: Do you need help choosing a primary care physician at the UCSF Medical Center? Get personalized assistance to help you make a choice to suit your personal preferences and geographic needs. Physicians are available at UCSF Medical Center, UCSF/Mount Zion and practices at Lakeshore and Daly City. Call 885-7777 weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

UCSF/Mount Zion Care Account: If you are thinking of switching Medicare supplemental insurance plans or choosing a supplemental policy, find out about important changes relating to Medicare at free lectures offered by Mount Zion Care Account, a free membership program providing discounted health care services for qualifying adults age 65 and older. Sponsored by UCSF/Mount Zion Center on Aging. Rm. 552, 5 North, UCSF/Mount Zion, 1600 Divisadero. Call 750-4125 for a schedule and to make reservation.

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Her music was neither pleasurable nor possible. It was instead, downright painful.

Don't forget to stretch.

Like a runner prior to a race or a dancer before the opening curtain, for violist Marina Carbone-Wilson this is an automatic pre-performance reminder.

Finger, hand and wrist exercises are now part of her fine-tuning, thanks to UCSF physical therapist and faculty member Nancy Byl, PhD, who also has aided pianists, percussionists and other talented people referred to UCSF's Health Program for Performing Artists.

For Marina, 27, playing the viola was always pleasant and soothing. But for a few weeks last year, music was neither pleasurable nor possible for the S.F. Conservatory student. It was instead downright painful.

Marina's switch to a 17-inch viola from a 16 1/2-inch instrument had already begun to strain her smaller than average left hand. She only started to feel discomfort, however, during a rigorous string quartet performance at a private party last August. "I got caught in traffic and didn't have time to warm up," recalls Marina. "Then, we played over two hours straight. It hurt that night, but I thought it would be better in the morning."

It was not. When she moved her thumb, even slightly, a sharp pain shot through her hand. "I couldn't use my left hand at all."

Her teacher and S.F. Symphony violist, Don Ehrlich, suggested that she contact the UCSF program where many Conservatory musicians and other performing artists have sought help for problems ranging from carpal tunnel syndrome to stage fright.

Marina was diagnosed with tendinitis in the area between her thumb and forefinger, and for four months she was under the care of Byl, who directs the UCSF Graduate Program in Physical Therapy. Byl also studies repetitive motion injury and hand movement disorders that may result from abnormal postures. Because of contortions and at times awkward movements of their hands and wrists, string musicians are vulnerable to injury.

For Marina, the injury meant loss of practice time and work — on weekends she often played with the Monterey or Santa Cruz Symphonies. She was practicing a Bartok Viola Concerto for her all-important master's recital in the spring, but the frequent high positions required for that piece could be too demanding on her injured hand. Instead, she had to prepare to play something smoother, perhaps Bach's Brandenburg Concerto #6. Under Byl's care, however, improvement was immediate.

Tom Wachs

Daily treatment for Marina included heat, delivered by ultrasound to the inflamed lining of the tendon sheath near her thumb. But the key part of her rehabilitation, says Marina, was Byl's tutelage in changing her hand position on the viola. She also learned how to move her fingers without placing too much stress on her thumb. Each day, she hooked up a biofeedback device, with electrodes measuring hand and finger muscle movement. When she pressed too hard, stressing her thumb, the machine beeped.

"I basically relearned how to play the viola," she says. "It's like learning to walk again after an accident."

The results have been tremendous. She can play faster and better, she says — her vibrato is much richer and easier to control. In April, Marina performed the Bach piece at her recital, and in May, graduated from the Conservatory. She's played well enough to earn a spot with the San Francisco Opera orchestra for its six-week East Coast tour in October.

Marina now preaches what she practices. When she teaches young and beginning violin students — who are starting off with "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" — she tells them hand positioning is everything. And, she tells them not to forget to stretch.

— Andy Evangelista

For more information on UCSF's Health Program for Performing Artists, call 476-7373.

(fold here) See reverse side of self-mailer below for a UCSF survey.

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To Our Neighbors
July/August/September 1995

Violist helped by performing artists' program

Preventing injuries during a fall

Infants may be endangered by shorter hospital stays

UCSF
University of California San Francisco
3333 California Street, San Francisco, CA 94143-0462

To Our Neighbors

Yes, I am interested in learning more about UCSF

☐ I need a primary care doctor. Please have a representative call me.

Please send me more information about these programs or services:

☐ HMOs offered through UCSF
☐ Primary care physicians
☐ Obstetrics
☐ Senior services
☐ Pediatrics
☐ Cancer care
☐ HIV/AIDS treatments
☐ Cardiac care
☐ Other _____
(please specify)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____
(home) (work)

What is your age? _____

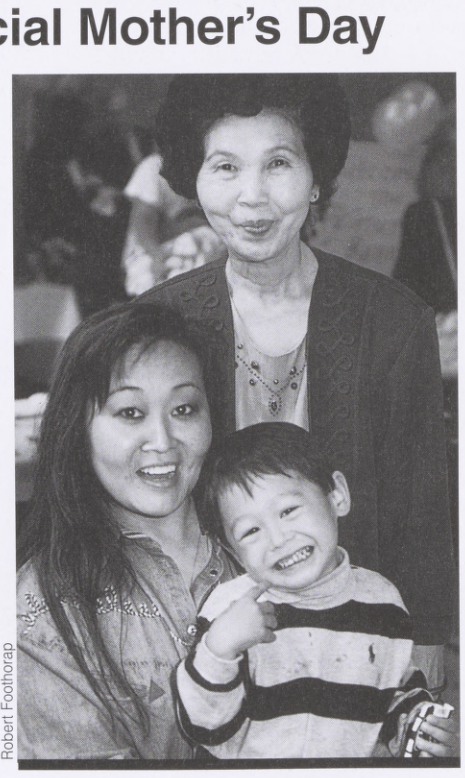
Do you receive health care at UCSF? Yes No

What is your hospital of choice? _____

All information will remain confidential.

Please cut at dotted lines, fold and use tape to secure pages together, making sure the tape does not cover any of the black bar codes on reverse side. No postage necessary.

A special Mother's Day


Robert Foothorap

Thirty families from all over the country attended the first-ever Mother's Day reunion party of the UCSF Fetal Treatment Center in mid-May. The Center specializes in diagnosis and treatment of serious problems in the fetus. In rare selected cases when the fetus has a life-threatening problem, "open" fetal surgery is the procedure, where the fetus is partially removed from the mother's uterus, undergoes a surgical procedure, and then is returned to the womb. Above, Mioko Shinn of Duluth, Ga., holds her four-year-old son Michael, who at the age of 27 weeks had surgery to remove a lung tumor. Shinn's guest was her great aunt, Kazu Ikeda of San Mateo. For further information on the Fetal Treatment Center, call 476-4080.